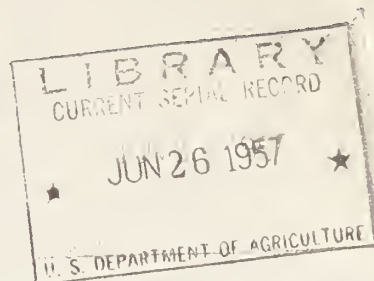


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FOOD PREVIEW



A summary of the food outlook especially designed to give maximum advance information to food editors to help them plan food features.

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Marketing Service

May 29, 1957
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- MEAT:** Consumption of all meat in 1957 is forecast at 159 pounds per person, down from the record 167 pounds in 1956 -- a record that will probably stand for quite a while. Consumption will be down about equally for beef and pork.
- Beef:** Total supplies probably will average lower than last year, during the rest of 1957. Slaughter of fed cattle (which yields top grade beef) will stay large the rest of the year since, on April 1, there were 4% more cattle on feed than a year before. However, grazing conditions have improved and marketings of grass-fed cattle (which yield lean beef) are not expected to reach the drought-stimulated levels of last summer and fall. With cattle numbers now trending down, beef supplies are likely to ease off for at least a couple of years.
- Pork:** But hog numbers appear to be on the way up again. Pork supplies this summer will not be changed much from last year, with hog marketings continuing below those of a year earlier. Larger summer farrowings in prospect will increase pork supplies later in 1957, to a level about the same as last fall and winter. The relatively high ratio of hog prices to corn prices this spring is likely to result in larger farrowings this fall. The increase seems likely to be in the neighborhood of 4 to 6%, and it will be reflected in pork supplies next spring.
- Lamb:** Supplies the rest of 1957 will probably average below 1956.
- POULTRY:**
- Eggs:** Production this fall and winter will be lower than last year. Through April, the hatch of chicks for laying flock replacement has been cut sharply -- down one fifth from the corresponding period last year. This assures a smaller number of laying pullets for this fall and winter, and reduced egg production.
- Chickens:** Broiler production is running ahead of last year's rate, and will continue so through summer. Hatchings for January through April were 5% larger than in same months last year. But marketings of young farm chickens from egg laying flocks late this summer will be down from last year by about one-fifth, in line with the curtailment in raising of replacement chickens.
- Turkeys:** The 1957 turkey crop will be a record, exceeding the 77 million birds raised in 1956. In January, farmers intended to raise 10% more turkeys than last year, and January and February hatches were up even more than this. But March and April hatches, and eggs in incubators at May 1, were up only about 3%. Large storage holdings will also swell supplies; current holdings are more than double a year earlier.

DAIRY: Milk production is running at a record high level, and is increasing seasonally. Present indications point to a new record high milk production in 1957, above the 125.7 billion pounds of last year. Recently, most of the excess over last year has been used in fluid form.

FRUIT:

- Deciduous: Prospective production of peaches in Southern States is 12% larger than in 1956. Peaches from these States and California provide most of market supplies during June and July. California prospects are for a larger crop of sweet cherries, but mid-May rains caused some losses. California's apricot crop is about the same as last year, but the plum crop is smaller.
- Citrus: At mid-May, supplies of Florida oranges (mostly to be marketed by early summer) were considerably larger than a year earlier. Supplies of California Valencias (to be marketed into next fall) were moderately smaller. Supplies of Florida grapefruit were much smaller than a year ago. Supplies of California lemons are considerably larger than a year ago.
- Berries: Supplies of strawberries from mid-spring and late-spring States are expected to be much larger than from the record 1956 crops. Prospects were tempered by heavy mid-May rains in California -- principal supplier at this time. Since stocks of frozen strawberries are large, a higher percentage of this year's crop probably will be shipped fresh.
- Melons: The spring cantaloup crop is forecast down 22% from the 1956 crop. Acreage for harvest in early summer States is estimated 3% below last year. Spring honey dew crop is forecast down nearly one-fourth from last year. The late spring watermelon crop is forecast up 6% over last year; preliminary estimates of early summer acreage are up 12% over last year.

VEGETABLES:

- Fresh: Production of spring vegetables is expected to be 3 percent less than in this season last year. Significantly less production is indicated for tomatoes, sweet corn, and onions. Partially offsetting these declines are marked increases in production of lettuce and asparagus. Smaller changes, both up and down, in other spring vegetable crops.
- Processed: Prospective planted acreage of 9 principal vegetables for commercial processing is 3% less than planted last year. Increases are indicated for snap beans, cucumbers for pickles, and winter and early spring spinach. Decreases are indicated for green lima beans, beets, cabbage for kraut (contract acreage only), sweet corn, green peas, and tomatoes.
- Potatoes: Production of late spring potatoes is expected to be about a fifth larger than last year, and farmers have planted slightly larger acreage for early summer harvest.

The Plentiful Foods Program

The U. S. Department of Agriculture, through its Plentiful Foods Program, will support industry campaigns on the following commodities, at the following times:

MILK AND DAIRY PRODUCTS June 1 to June 30

MIDSUMMER TURKEY TIME July 25 to August 4
